



Terrace
Gardening
For
Beginners

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INTRODUCTION

Life in the city is great! - For the most part. We have access to good schools, hospitals, jobs, and entertainment centres but there are problems too, like overcrowding, pollution, and traffic woes.

What would make city life better is the presence of more greenery. In our country, trees are recklessly cut down to accommodate more houses, river beds are turned into housing complexes and our daily commute spews more and more toxins into the air.

It is not just the air that is toxic, even the food we eat is equally toxic with



farmers spraying generous amounts of dangerous, banned and expired fertilizers on the fruits and vegetables we consume. This indiscriminate use of pesticides and

fertilizers are causing birth defects, abnormalities and cancer, yet we turn a blind eye to this danger.

But this is something you and I already know!

If you want a breath of clean, fresh air, you don't have to take a 30-minute ride (causing more pollution) to a park or a beach or spend a ton of money to unwind at a nature resort. Similarly, if you want to eat healthy, fresh, organic fruits and vegetables, you don't have to search long and wide for an organic shop in your locality.

Setting up a terrace garden in your home can solve both problems!

Terrace gardening may sound like a complicated, time consuming process that is expensive. But the truth is, you can set up a green space in your home even on a window sill or balcony if you are constrained for space.

You don't have to splash a lot of money to set it up - a small monthly budget should work out nicely. And if you're a busy corporate with little or no time to spend on gardening, surely an hour or two a day won't be hard to set aside!



In fact, gardening is a highly therapeutic activity that will help you be more productive in the workplace. Spending just half an hour in the morning and another half hour in the evening tending to your plants will help you get rid of your stress and anxiety, reduce your breathing problems and leave you feeling refreshed and exhilarated.

If you're not into producing vegetables, no worries. You can simply set up a herb or flower bed, or an exotic green landscape with a spring decked with



lights to unwind in the comfort of your home.

Finally, terrace gardening is more than just a person-centric activity. When you set up a terrace garden, you also clean up your environment and inspire your neighbours and friends to do their own bit for it as well. Before too long,

your neighbours will be sharing seeds and plants and your entire neighbourhood will be transformed into a green zone. You can be proud that you're doing your bit for Mother Earth and inspiring others to do so as well.

So, are you eager and inspired to set up your own garden? Great!

If you're all geared up but don't know where to start, this eBook will be your guide.

In this eBook, I talk about the benefits of terrace gardening, the things you'll need to get started, how to plan your garden, the most common mistakes you'll make as a newbie gardener and how you can avoid them. There's also a bit of bonus material in the form of a gardening calendar to help you plan your vegetable garden.

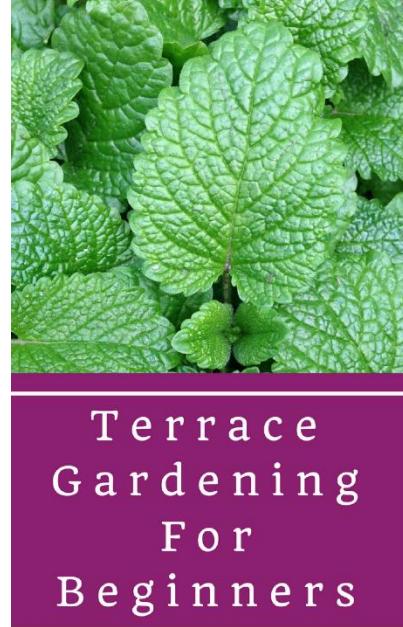
You can also visit <http://myorganicgarden.in> for

more updates and tips or you can reach out to me at

gardenlover@myorganicgarden.in with your questions or queries.

If your life is filled with stress and seems out of balance, just like the turbulent climate change we are experiencing, give terrace gardening a try!

You will find it more fulfilling and engaging than working out in the gym! And you'll get the satisfaction of making your home and neighbourhood a better place to live in.



Last but not least, I want to Thank You for Downloading Terrace Gardening for Beginners. I hope you will use the actionable information in this book to create a wonderful terrace garden in your home and enjoy the fruits of your labour!

The glory of gardening: hands in the dirt, head in the sun, heart with nature. To nurture a garden is to feed not just the body, but the soul. ~ Alfred Austin

CHAPTER 1: 10 GOOD REASONS TO START A TERRACE GARDEN

You may think that gardening is an ideal activity for your grandpa or grandma because they have time on their hands and can afford to idle it away on plants. Or maybe you live in a small apartment and have no space to set up your garden. Or it is your jet-setting lifestyle that's in the way.

Whatever your excuse for not starting a garden, you're missing out on a ton of great benefits that it affords. If you are cooking up excuses why you shouldn't start a garden, stop it right now and start counting the 10 good reasons why you should start a terrace garden in your home.

1. COOK TASTY AND NUTRITIOUS FOOD

Well, the most obvious reason why you'd want to start your own garden is



that vegetables grown in your own garden are fresh and free from chemicals and pesticides that are sprayed in shop-bought items. Fresh

ingredients also add more taste to your meals and offers better nutritional value. There is nothing quite like biting into a fresh juicy tomato or making lemonade from a freshly plucked lime and fragrant mint.

2. COOK MORE VEGETABLES

If you don't have a garden at home, chances are you are buying more meat and junk food from the supermarket. On the other hand, home-grown vegetables



give you a personal interest in eating what you harvested. Tell your kids to eat their greens and they'll throw a fit. But ask them to grow their own greens and other veggies and they can't

wait to eat the work of their hands.

Growing your own vegetable garden can help kids develop the right attitude towards fresh fruits and vegetables and encourage them to automatically eat the right foods from a young age.

3. BURN CALORIES AND STAY FIT

If you have a desk job, chances are you never get up from your seat unless you absolutely have to. You work at your desk and eat while you work so you can get more work done. At the end of the day, you end up with an eye strain, cramped muscles and spinal problems.

You probably make up for all that sitting by going to the gym and throwing away good money on someone else. Instead a simple activity like gardening



can give you the physical exertion you need to stay fit and healthy.

Digging the soil, tilling, mixing, potting, repotting, preparing the compost, transplanting seedlings, and watering all adds up to a

good workout – one that doesn't cost a penny.

Studies indicate that spending one hour on moderate gardening activities like planting and weeding can burn between 200-400 calories but if you're hauling

soil up your terrace and doing some intensive work, you could lose as much as 600 calories per hour.

Best of all, it also makes you more goal oriented. Doing a steady run on the treadmill may feel great on Day 1 but after the 15th day, you'll feel drained and bored with the monotony of the task.

With gardening, you don't just keep doing different activities every day, you also tend to become goal oriented and more purposeful because you want to achieve more than just losing calories at the end of that workout – you want your garden to thrive. So there's exercise for the mind and body.

4. GET MORE VITAMIN D



You are probably aware that Vitamin D is not naturally produced in the body and the lack of it may lead to several illnesses like heart disease, multiple sclerosis and depression. Vitamin D also helps strengthen bones, regulates insulin levels and promotes good cardiovascular health.

health among other things. A few hours of exposure in the sun can give you the necessary Vitamin D fix the natural way, so why not take it?

5. GET STRONG HANDS

This may sound like a silly thing, but you'd be surprised how much you take your hand strength for granted. As you grow older, you lose strength in your



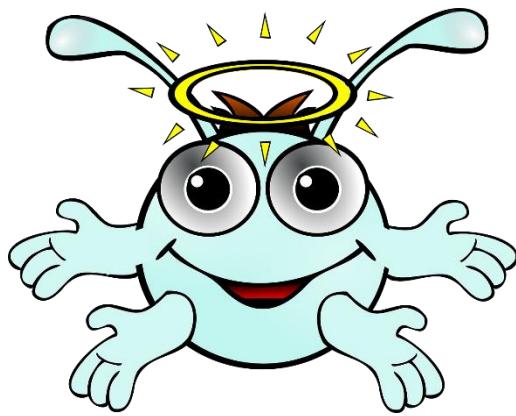
arms. Keeping your fingers nimble and routinely pruning, pinching and working with your hands in the garden will give you stronger grip and keep your hands strong for a long time

to come. This is important as poor grip strength is associated with premature mortality.

6. CONNECT WITH GOOD BACTERIA

Today, we live in a world of hyper-cleanliness to the point where we have cleaned away all the good bacteria that kept out many diseases. Gardening brings us back into contact with them. One such bacteria is Mycobacterium

Vaccae, which is found in the soil and gives off that beautiful earthy smell when it rains.



When you do gardening, you tend to take in this bacteria, which has the effect of strengthening your immune system and making your body less susceptible to inflammation. These bacteria are also said to

increase the levels of serotonin, which is a chemical in the brain responsible for mood regulation, thereby acting as an antidepressant of sort (without the side effects!)

7. RELIEVE STRESS

In today's multitasking world, there's not a day that doesn't go by when we



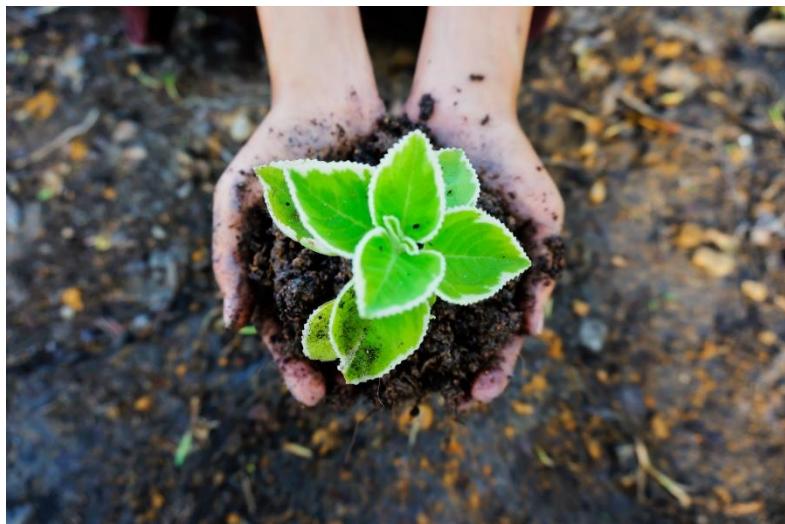
are stressed. Prolonged hours of work, longer hours of concentration and worries about meeting targets, looking after the kids and getting through that maddening traffic

every day can take its toll.

Various studies have shown that gardening is a powerful stress reliever that is far more effective than other leisure activities. In fact, the sights, smells, and sounds of nature take our mind off the focused attention and lead us to a more casual and effortless state of focus that brings out a positive mood swing.

8. BECOME PURPOSEFUL

Gardening makes you more purposeful in life. Although gardening sounds like a passive activity, it stimulates your mind and body to think in creative ways to accomplish an end result. Planning your garden, choosing your containers, coming up with a good theme for your garden and deciding which plants go



where gives you and your family a chance to stimulate the mind into coming up with creative design ideas for your project.

Once you've decided on a plan, finding the resources needed, working on the soil, planting, watering, pruning, fertilizing and harvesting keeps your body

engaged and active. Before you know it, you will have a garden calendar all drawn up with what to plant in each month and when to harvest them.

Best of all, you will look forward to all the coming days and weeks ahead (in fact, you can't wait for it!) and you'll accomplish everything with a purposeful, yet contended smile on your face.

9. CONNECT WITH THE COMMUNITY

You'd be surprised to know that gardening is an activity that not only improves the mind and body, it also helps to improve our relationship with others. Being in a natural environment tends to make us kinder and more

community oriented people when compared to those who spend time in building and other artificial surroundings.



When you garden and reap fruits and

vegetables, you cannot but share them with your neighbours and friends. If

you are connected to Facebook, you'll become part of a community of fellow gardeners who will share tips and best practices with you as well.

You may even end up sharing seeds, stems, and plants with the community. What's more, if you have a group of enthusiasts in your neighbourhood, you might even celebrate World Environment Day in a grand manner and involve and motivate others to get involved.

10. BOND WITH YOUR FAMILY

If you garden with your family, you also have the advantage of spending



quality time with your kids and spouse in activities other than your responsibilities. A family that gardens together creates lasting memories that each one will always fondly look upon.

This way, you also get to teach your kids some responsibility and instil a sense of accomplishment and pride in them. When you build such strong bonds with your family, not only will your kids turn out alright, you won't hear any more nagging from your wife either! (wink! wink!)

If you thought gardening was for old people, or those who have too much time on their hands, think again! A beautiful and bountiful garden makes for a happy and fulfilled man and a happy and fulfilled man makes for a very happy and contended family. So throw out all your excuses and start growing your organic garden today! You won't be just growing a garden, you'll be building a happy and healthy family. What else could you ask for in life!

There can be no other occupation like gardening in which, if you were to creep up behind someone at their work, you would find them smiling. ~Mirabel Osler

CHAPTER 2: THINGS NEEDED TO GET STARTED WITH TERRACE GARDENING

Now that you are convinced of the benefits of terrace gardening and are ready to set up your garden, it is time to learn about some of the tools to get started with your terrace garden.

SPACE

First you need to determine how much space you have for starting your garden. This is essential to determine the number of pots that can be accommodated.

SUNLIGHT

Sunlight is absolutely essential for plants to grow properly. Ensure that your terrace receives full to partial sunlight.

WATER

Make sure you have access to a water source on your terrace. Most houses should have a water tank with a tap from where water can be sourced for watering the plants. If you don't have such an option, arrange an appropriate medium for accessing water.

SHADE NET



Indian summers can be scorching. As much as plants love the sunshine, too much of it can wilt the plants, if not kill them. You can

buy a shade net from an online store or reuse an old mosquito net to protect container plants from excessive heat and torrential rains.

TRELLIS OR POLES



If you plan to set up a vegetable garden, make sure you have a trellis for climbers and creepers to grow comfortably. You can use wooden poles; PVC pipes or bamboo sticks to create a square or rectangular support for the plants.

GARDEN TOOLS

As you start to garden, you'll realize that you need some essential tools to mix



the soil, cut your dried flower stems or remove the fruits and vegetables without damaging the plants. For starters, get yourselves a pair of good rubber gloves, a

shear, a rake and a sprayer. You can buy other essentials as you grow your garden. Having a rack space to store the essentials also helps.

CONTAINERS

The next item that you need for your garden are containers. There are number of different container types available in the market and you can take your pick from any of them.

When choosing a container, keep in mind the plants that you intend to grow.



Climbers and creepers require larger pots, plants like chilies and tomatoes can be grown in medium sized pots and green leafy vegetables will do perfectly well in small sized

pots or poly bags.

When picking containers, go for the light ones, preferably coloured so they absorb less heat. Lighter containers also make it easy for you to move the pots around if required.

When picking containers, it would help to also buy plastic trays to hold off the excess water. However, this is just an optional purchase.

SOIL

Soil is another one of the primary elements needed for a terrace garden. And I



don't mean any soil you can dig off the ground or borrow from your neighbour. The soil must be enriched with all the necessary nutrients needed for plant growth. You can buy readymade potting mixes from a nursery or online store, but that will cost a penny. Alternately, you can buy some sand from a nursery and add coco peat and compost in equal parts to create your ideal soil.

SEED TRAYS

Some plants must be transplanted to another pot if they are to yield a good produce. If you plan on growing such plants, you'll need to sow the seeds in one container and when they germinate and sprout a few leaves, transfer them to the primary pot where you want them to grow. Seed trays come in

very handy for this purpose, but if you have a small budget, you can get creative and use cardboard boxes, citrus peels, egg shells and curd/yogurt cups to sow the seeds.

COMPOST KIT



I find it highly useful to have my own home made compost to nourish and condition the soil at frequent intervals. Having a compost kit like a SmartBin lets you get a constant supply of good home-made compost for your garden. This will take at least a couple of months to set up and get started so the sooner you invest in a compost kit, the better.

SEEDS & PLANTS

You can buy seeds from a local nursery or from online stores. If you borrow



seeds from a neighbour ensure that they are from healthy plants.

If you are buying plants, make sure you pick only the

healthiest plants from a nursery or from a neighbour/friend. Else you might end up infecting your whole garden as soon as you get started.

These are some of the essential tools and items you will require to get started with your terrace garden. Consider the space available, the type of plants you want to harvest and then make the investment.

You can budget your expenses and spread the cost over a few months so that you don't spend too much of money in the first month itself. For example, you can avoid investing in a shade net right away if you are starting your garden in the cooler season. Similarly, when investing in containers, you can go for poly bags as they are cheaper and convenient for growing certain types of crops.

ORGANIC FERTILIZERS

Despite the fact that you have a good potting mix with compost, the nutrients in the soil get depleted very quickly. Organic fertilizers therefore must be used to supplement the plants at regular intervals.

You can buy cow dung, chicken manure, bone meal, fish meal, Epsom salts, Vermicompost as well as seaweed cake, oilseed cake, cottonseed cake, neem oil, neem cake, fish emulsion and seaweed emulsion to fertilize your plants. All of these are made from organic matter but check the labels before you buy.

When I initially started my garden, I bought seaweed emulsion, Vermicompost, and neem cake. The seaweed liquid did wonders for my plant



growth and quickly became my favourite fertilizer.

I have since bought bone meal and fish meal for my roses, which seem happy enough and am in the process of using Epsom salts on my capsicum

and tomato plants, which I will watch closely in the coming days.

For pest control, neem oil is said to work great, but I found a good drenching of tobacco water to do the trick. Still, it never hurts to have neem oil handy.

If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need. ~Cicero

CHAPTER 3: PLANNING YOUR CONTAINER GARDEN

Now that you've chosen and put together all the essential items needed to start a terrace garden, it's time to start planning the layout in more detail.

DECIDING THE PLANTS



If your express reason for starting terrace garden is to grow vegetables, first decide on the list of vegetables you want to start with. Tomatoes, brinjals, beans, any type of gourds, green leafy vegetables, radish, and mint are some of the easiest vegetables to grow, with fairly quick harvest times to boot.

Also consider the climatic conditions and season when you are starting your garden. Start with plants that are ideal to grow in that particular season.

Also try to include some flowering plants in your garden plan. Plants like the marigold are helpful in keeping pests away while others like the sunflower attract bees to the garden and help in pollination.

CHOOSING THE LOCATION



When choosing a location for your garden, consider the needs of your plants.

Some plants require full sun, others do well in partial shade and still others will grow in a cool place.

Place the plants according to their sunshine requirements and you'll save yourself and the plants the hassle of moving around different parts of the terrace.

Vegetables need more breathing space so make sure you provide enough space around the plants. It won't do you any good to keep bumping into the plant when you are pruning them.

Also check if your plants need to spread or climb and choose a location where you can give it adequate support like setting up poles and trellises.

One other thing to consider is quick access to water. You shouldn't have to carry water from your house all the way up to the terrace to water the plants.

Once you've decided on the location of your plants, it's time to consider other requirements.

CHOOSING YOUR CONTAINERS



When it comes to picking containers, you have a whole lot of options available at your disposal. You have deep ones, wide ones, small, big and medium size pots. You also have containers made with different types of materials; cement pots, clay pots, plastic containers, grow bags, and so on. Here are some points to keep in mind when choosing containers.

- If your plant is going to be exposed to the sun and rain, avoid using plastic pots. Prolonged exposure to the elements will make them brittle.

- Similarly, avoid using dark coloured containers as they will trap the heat and retain the higher temperatures, ultimately harming the growth and development of the plants.
- Cement pots can very heavy and not easy to carry or move around, so think twice about using them if you're going to be moving your pots a lot.
- Recycled items like old buckets, broken jugs, thermocol boxes, gunny bags, shoes, and water cans aren't something I'd recommend since they don't give an aesthetic look to your garden. If you must use them, ensure they have proper drainage.
- Mud pots are the best as they are not heavy and allow the soil to breathe.

POT SIZES

Here are some ideal pot sizes for growing some common home garden plants:

Plant	Pot Size
Garlic, Basil, Spinach and other green leafy vegetables, Mint, Roses,	14x10 inches

Onions, Cabbage, Radish, Cucumbers	16x12 inches
All creepers and climbers like watermelon and musk melon	18x14 inches

PREPARING THE SOIL



Next, it is time to prepare the potting soil. Soil is the most essential ingredient that helps in the healthy growth and development of the plant. It anchors the

roots to the soil and supplies it with all the essential nutrients needed for growth.

An ideal soil is one that has a fine crumbly structure, is rich in organic matter, and has good drainage. Since you usually don't have instant access to the perfect soil, you can create an ideal potting mix that contains the above mentioned characteristics.

A simple potting soil mix is to use 1-part sand (you can get them from a nursery), 1-part coco peat, and 1-part compost (available online).

You can top up the soil with fresh compost in regular intervals to retain the soil composition. Again, there are plenty of cheap and easy ways you can make your own compost at home with kitchen scrap. Having your own home made compost is cheap and highly effective way of conditioning your soil that quickly gets depleted of nutrients.

Before you add sand to your container, make sure to close all the holes at the bottom of the pot with a piece of flat stone. This is to prevent the soil and nutrients draining away from the pot when you deeply water the plant.

WATERING



Watering your plants is one of the most intensive parts of gardening. While it may seem like a piece of cake, it is not as simple as it sounds. Before you water your plants, you need to have a good understanding of your plants' water needs as well.

Too much watering, too little watering or inconsistent watering can lead to various fungal diseases and plant problems like yellow leaves, root rotting, and stunted growth. Keep these points in mind when watering plants:

- Always water the plants in the mornings.
- Never spray water on the leaves. If you must do it early morning and never in the evenings.
- Make sure water never stagnates in your containers.
- Water your plants twice a day if the weather is too hot and make sure the water temperature is cool when you do.

FERTILIZING YOUR PLANTS



Container plants have limited soil space and therefore a limited supply of nutrients, which gets quickly depleted. Therefore, it is essential that you

fertilize your plants regularly with a mix of liquid, compost and granular fertilizers – all organic of course.

Organic fertilizers that you use should have 3 essential ingredients:

- Nitrogen – for production of healthy green leaves
- Phosphorous – for root growth and development of the plant
- Potassium - for tastier produce

Organic, home-made compost is ideal to top up your soil while bone meal, fish meal, and seaweed can provide the various nutritional requirements specified above.

Whatever fertilizer you choose for your soil, make sure you don't over fertilize as it can be harmful for your plant. And read the label instructions before application. In my experience I found it better to test the application on a small area of the plant before applying it on the whole plant.

So with the right choice of containers, location, potting mix, watering and fertilizing, you have set the right foundation for your plants to grow heartily and produce healthy vegetables and abundant blooms.

Next up, we'll take a look at how you can go wrong with your plants despite understanding their growing requirements and needs.

CHAPTER 4: COMMON MISTAKES EVERY NEWBIE GARDENER MAKES AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

Let's face it! Gardening doesn't look like a complicated job. You drop the seeds in the soil, water them regularly and when they start to grow, you nourish them with fertilizers. All the books, web articles and chit chat with the neighbours will tell you that.

But when you really start your gardening project, you'll find that it isn't so simple after all. There are rules that must be obeyed even if they appear to be something as simple as watering the plants in the mornings rather than the evenings. Whether you are a newbie gardener or an old hand, here are some of the common gardening mistakes to avoid when container gardening.

1. BUYING WEAK PLANTS FROM THE NURSERY



The local nursery is a great place to buy plants, but not all of them may actually be healthy. Avoid picking up plants with brown, yellow or wilted leaves. Also inspect the

plant for aphids, scale, spider mites and other tiny creatures as you don't want them to infest the rest of your garden. Pick up plants with lush vibrant foliage and sturdy stems.

2. HAVING TOO MANY SMALL POTS

It is easy to get carried away and try to have as many plants in your garden as possible. This will cause you to make stupid decisions like buying plenty of



small plant containers to hold the different plants. That's certainly one mistake I made in the initial years of gardening. I ended up with a clumsy balcony and my plants eventually ran out of space

to grow. Vary the size of your containers keeping in mind the type of plants you intend to grow.

3. OVER/UNDER WATERING PLANTS

If you live in a sunny spot, chances are, you feel the need to water your plants generously morning, noon and evening. However, you must remember that

plants grown in containers don't need that much of water love. Yellowing of leaves is a sure-fire sign of over watering the plants.



Just as you feel the need to over water your plants, you may also feel too lazy to water them, leaving your plants bereft of water. Signs of drooping leaves is a sure fire sign

that your plant is dying of thirst. Inconsistent watering can also cause plant diseases and fruit dropings.

Place your finger into the soil until your second knuckle is reached. If the tip of your finger is not moist, you can water the plants.

Remember that your container is small and can hold only so much moisture, so when you are pouring water, don't just sprinkle to wet the top layer of the soil but pour enough water until it reaches the bottom of the pot and a little bit drains out.

Understand the moisture requirements for each of your plants and follow them judiciously when watering.

4. WATERING THE LEAVES

Another common mistake that you tend to make when watering plants is to water the leaves. It may feel wonderful to have green leaves glistening with water in the fading sunlight, but this is a sure-fire way to set up a breeding



ground for fungus and disease. If you can't use a drip irrigation system, pour the water in the soil so that the roots can take it directly, where they need it the most.

Schedule your watering in the early morning hours and avoid evening watering as overnight moisture can encourage disease.

5. NOT PRUNING REGULARLY

Some plants require regular pruning to keep them healthy and promote growth. Pruning is the removal of certain parts of the plant that are of no use to it. However, you may fear that pruning will kill the plant and avoid doing it.

Bad Idea!



It may seem like a dastardly thing to nip off leaves and stems that are full of gorgeous looking buds, but if you don't do it, you may end up with a zombie plant.

My jasmine plant had plenty of gorgeous looking green leaves but showed no signs of growing further or flowering. When I nipped off all the older leaves, new shoots started to grow everywhere and I had a plant full of flowers in about a week's time. So don't hesitate pruning the plants at the right time. Also keep removing dead leaves and flowers as they shed. You will not only have a clean garden, but your plants will not feel stressed as well.

6. NOT COMPOSTING

All plants require a nutrient rich soil to grow. This is even more significant in container gardening as growing plants quickly zap the nutrition leaving the



soil in need of constant replenishment. You must therefore make time to add compost to your plants every month or two. If you don't have the time to make your own compost, you can buy

them from a local nursery or online store.

7. OVER FERTILIZING



Fertilizers are essential for the healthy growth of plants. Often, in your enthusiasm to see more vegetables or flowers in your plants, you may keep piling on the fertilizers. This will have a detrimental effect on your plants. In some cases, your plants will stop flowering and in others, they will

just die on you. Moderation must be practiced in the use of fertilizers. Read the labels and apply fertilizers judiciously.

8. IGNORING PESTS

Pests are called pests for a reason. Give them a little room and they will completely destroy your plants before you know what hit you. I made the mistake of ignoring those pesky mealy bugs on my gorgeous orange Ixora and before I knew it, the whole plant was infected and eventually died on me.



Pests are hard to get rid of and since chemical fertilizers a strict no-no, it takes double the effort to keep your garden pest free. In fact, it is an ongoing job that never ends.

One way to keep off pests is to feed your plants well and keep them healthy.

Next is to water your plants consistently.

Pests will attack your weak plants so you'll need to keep working on them and trying various concoctions to get rid of them. If all fails, nip off the infected stems or get rid of the plant to prevent the spread.

Whatever you do, never ignore these tiny creatures as they are capable of great damage. Better to lose a plant than a whole garden.

9. NOT MULCHING

Mulching is a simple job but a very effective one. It helps the soil retain



moisture, keeps the frost and cold away, and prevents those villainous weeds from showing up. It also eventually ends up nourishing your soil but again laziness may just keep you from doing this simple task.

Stop making this mistake and take action. Your plants will be happy and so will you.

10. PLANTING OUT OF SEASON



season and plant them accordingly.

It's easy to get discouraged when seeds you planted failed to germinate. It may have been because you simply planted them in the wrong season. Be aware of which plants grow in which

11. PLANTING IN THE SHADE

My roses never grew a new leaf for over a year and I simply assumed that it was because they were not suited to the hot Chennai weather. But the actual reason they were struggling to grow and were eventually rotting and dying was because I did not allow it the full 6-8 hours of sunlight it needed to grow. When I moved my pots from a shady spot to my terrace, I had fresh leaves and buds sprouting in just 3 days. Now they are happily blooming every day!

Do your homework properly and check if your plants require full sunlight or partial shade. Place them in the appropriate part of your terrace and you will start to see the rewards.

12. PLANTING THE SAME CROP IN THE SAME POT REPEATEDLY



You may be used to the idea of using the gorgeous red container to host your greens and may keep repeatedly growing greens in that container after the first yield has come through.

Again, Bad Idea!

Just as you have gone used to the idea of seeing greens in your red container, insects and bugs that have gotten used to munching on them as well, will leave behind plenty of larvae and eggs to feed on the next crop.

Doing a plant rotation actually helps break that cycle.

Another issue is that the greens may have replenished the nutrients required for their growth, leaving the subsequent yields poor. Some plants like legumes actually repair the soil by fixing nitrogen in the soil, thereby helping the next batch of crops that need it but it is not the case with every plant. So avoid



repeating the same crop of vegetables in the same container after every harvest.

Now that you are aware of these mistakes and how to correct them, you

can give your plants the right care and attention they require.

One of the worst mistakes you can make as a gardener is to think you're in charge. ~Janet Gillespie

CHAPTER 5: COMMON CONCERNS AND QUESTIONS ABOUT CONTAINER GARDENING

Gardening may sound like a simple enough activity that works in auto pilot mode, but it isn't so! As you begin your organic gardening project, you will find yourself making a lot of mistakes; sometimes you won't be making any mistakes and yet you'll be struggling with issues like when those sneaky squirrels eat up your melons or those busy bees bore into your roses!

You may wonder why your leaves are turning yellow, your fruits are dropping or your plants are flowering but not fruiting. Don't worry! These are common problems that every gardener faces. Just remember that gardening is a fun activity to be enjoyed and any problems you face in terrace gardening is always fixable with an appropriate corrective action.

That said, here are some common problems or concerns you're likely to face once you start your own organic garden and some solutions for them.

Q1: My leaf edges are browning. Why is this happening?

Cause: This may be due to excessive salt content in the soil or excessive use of fertilizers.

Solution: Stop further application of the fertilizer. Then get rid of the excessive fertilizer piled up in the soil by watering the plant deeply until the water drains out and washes off the salt.

Q2: My plant stems look thin and weak and are not productive.

Cause 1: There is too much nitrogen in the soil.

Solution 1: Reduce the application of fertilizers and water deeply until it drains out and washes off the excess fertilizer.

Cause 2: The plant is not receiving enough of sunlight.

Solution 2: Move the plant to a sunny spot in the terrace.

Q3. My stems are starting to turn yellowish near the base of the plant.

Why is this happening?

Cause: You are overwatering your plant.

Solution: Water your plants less. Check if the water is draining properly. Place your finger inside the soil. If the tip comes out wet, don't water the plant that day. If your draining holes are clogged, clear the blockage.

Cause 2: Not applying enough fertilizer.

Solution 2: It may be that your plant is grown big and needs more nutrients to supplement its growth. Try fertilizing these plants more frequently.

Q4: The leaves on my plant are wilting.

Cause: Not enough aeration is suffocating your plant.

Solution: Water your plants less. If water stagnates in the soil, it will prevent the roots from accessing oxygen. Check your drainage and remove blockages if any.

Q5: The leaves and fruits have holes in them.

Cause: Your plants are attacked by pests like leaf worms and bugs.

Solution: Use an organic pesticide to get rid of the insects.

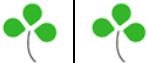
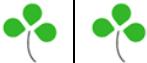
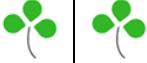
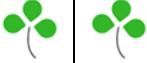
Q6: A white powdery substance is appearing on my plants.

Cause: Your plants may be hit by a fungal infection like powdery mildew that afflicts plants in the cold weather.

Solution: Do not water the leaves of the plant. Remove the affected leaves. If possible, move the plants to a warmer location.

BONUS READING: GARDENING CALENDAR FOR NORTH INDIA

Here's a quick roundup of what vegetables you can sow during the different months in North India.

Vegetable	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Brinjals												
Okra												
Cucumber												
Peas												
Radish												
Spinach												
Tomatoes												
Lettuce												

Bitter Gourd												
Bottle Gourd												
Ridge Gourd												
Turnip												
Carrots												
Cauliflower												
French Beans												
Onion												
Beet Root												

Cabbage											
Watermelon											
Capsicum											
Melons											

One of the worst mistakes you can make as a gardener is to think you're in charge. ~Janet Gillespie

BONUS READING: GARDENING CALENDAR FOR SOUTH INDIA

Here's a quick roundup of what vegetables you can sow during the different months in South India.

Vegetable	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Brinjals												
Okra												
Cucumber												
Peas												
Radish												
Spinach												
Tomatoes												
Lettuce												

Bitter Gourd										
Bottle Gourd										
Ridge Gourd										
Turnip										
Carrots										
Onion										
Beet Root										
Cabbage										
Watermelon										
Capsicum										

Cauliflower												
Melons												

Learn to be an observer in all seasons. Every single day, your garden has something new and wonderful to show you. ~Author Unknown

BONUS READING: PLANTS THAT MUST BE TRANSPLANTED

Certain plants must be sowed in a seed starter and then transplanted to a bigger pot. Failure to do this will result in a crop that does not yield fruit. So when you're planning to grow these plants, ensure that you transplant them to another pot after they have grown about 4-5 inches tall with 3 to 4 leaves.

- Brinjals
- Cabbage
- Capsicum
- Chillies
- Cauliflower
- Lettuce
- Pepper
- Tomato

CONCLUSION

Thank You Once Again for Subscribing to MyOrganicGarden and reading my guide **Terrace Gardening for Beginners.**

I hope this book will help you to start preparing and planning your very own container garden in your home.

Shopping for containers, seeds, and plants is a lot of fun and planting your first garden is exciting, but remember- it takes patience to grow your own vegetables at home and there are no quick shortcuts.

I hope you do enjoy setting up your garden and reaping the fruits of your labour!

Do visit my website myorganicgarden.in and share your gardening exploits, questions, and tips with us and the community!

Happy Gardening to You!

Essential advice for the gardener: grow peas of mind, lettuce be thankful, squash selfishness, turnip to help thy neighbour, and always make thyme for loved ones. ~Author Unknown